



Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Annual Impact Report Available

Release Date: June 17, 2011

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MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has released the 2009-2010 Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin Annual Impact Report. The 24-page report is available online at datcp.wisconsin.gov, under *Business, Buy Local Buy Wisconsin*.

Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin (BLBW) is a comprehensive economic development program designed to increase the local sales of agricultural food products grown within the state. One component of this program is a competitive grant program that works to reduce the marketing, distribution, and processing hurdles that impede the expansion of local food sales.

Neesvig's, Inc. received a 2010 Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant to create a local foods distribution model other businesses could replicate. Because of the grant, Neesvig's has built new relationships, allowing restaurants and stores to rely on a consistent local food supply from one distribution source.

“There is a clientele that wants to support local producers and the local economy,” said Krystal Winch, the Buy Local Specialist at Neesvig's. “There is an excitement and need for local foods, and by creating a model and eliminating barriers, many businesses will benefit.”

In the first two years, the BLBW grants resulted in \$2.7 million in new local food sales and \$600,000 in new investment. Using a multiplier effect, from a regional economic model specific to Wisconsin, those sales equate to a total effect of \$4.2 million in business sales. Over 1,200 Wisconsin producers have benefited from the grants, and dozens of other jobs have been created and retained in the state.

The CSA Coalition has been working with growers for almost twenty years providing education, outreach, and community building. When they received a 2009 BLBW grant, they saw it as a perfect opportunity to offer new services to increase grower profits and increase consumer access to local foods.

“This grant allowed us to provide additional training and resource sharing to over 130 growers,” said Kiera Mulvey, the Executive Director of The CSA Coalition. “We were able to teach our growers additional business skills they needed to improve their efficiency and capacity to provide a quality product to their customers.”

The annual report includes profiles of each grant recipient, a summary of program activities, and highlights from the program. There were nine grant recipients in 2009, and five grant recipients in 2010.

For more information on the BLBW program or to receive a hard copy of the report, contact Teresa Engel at 608-224-5101.

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The CSA Coalition was able to offer additional training opportunities for growers and increase local food sales with their 2009 Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant. The stories of all the grant recipients are now available in the 2009-10 Annual Impact Report. (CSA Coalition Photo)